

Yearbook

NEW  IN CHESS

133

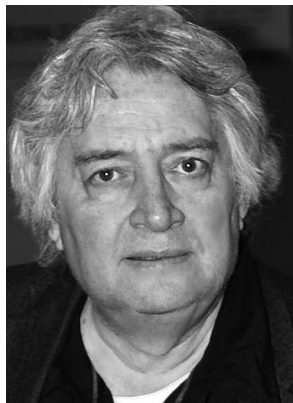
Contributing Authors

Adams • Adorjan • Bosch • Cummings • Dubov • Flear • Fogarasi • Giri • Gupta
Hungaski • Ikonnikov • Ilczuk • Järvenpää • Kaufman • Kuljasevic • l'Ami • Mchedlishvili
Moskalenko • Motylev • Nepomniachtchi • P.H.Nielsen • Olthof • Panczyk • Petrov
Ponomariov • Ris • Rodi • Sielecki • So • Sokolov • K.Szabo • Timman • Van der Tak • Vegh

CHESS OPENING NEWS

Edited by Jan Timman

From the editor



Good old friends

We welcome Michael Adams, who writes his first Survey in this Yearbook. And a welcome back to Ivan Sokolov, who once wrote a Survey a few years back, in Yearbook 95. Both grandmasters are good old friends of mine and I am delighted that they decided to contribute to the Yearbook.

On 26 August, Pal Benko passed away. He was never much of a theoretician and in fact this may have been the reason why he liked the idea of a positional gambit. In the Benko Gambit Black avoids mainstream theory. Shortly before his death Benko was honoured with a theme tournament: all games should be played with the Benko Gambit. Such a tournament belongs to an old tradition that is rarely seen these days. Andras Adorjan and Endre Vegh report.

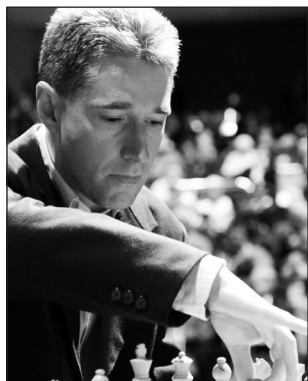
It is always interesting to see top players use openings with both white and black. Shakhriyar Mamedyarov's method of fighting the Grünfeld is quite instructive. Abhijeet Gupta writes the Survey.

In the same sense, the book *King's Indian according to Tigran Petrosian* by Igor Yanvarjov is really interesting. Petrosian played the King's Indian with both colours. I must say that his White games were most instructive in this respect. The book was published by Russell Enterprises, and Glenn Flear writes the review, as always.

Enjoy this issue!

Jan Timman

Opening Highlights



Michael Adams

We're very happy to present to you the first Yearbook Survey by world top player and former Candidate Michael Adams. Of course it had to be about the British Championship, which Mickey won for the 7th time this year. In the first round he had to play for a win with black in a **long and complicated Giuoco Piano line**. It requires a combative stance in a hairy queenless middlegame, but this calculated risk netted Adams his first win in his 7½/9 tournament victory (page 109).

Wesley So

Highly creative players like Daniil Dubov and Shakhriyar Mamedyarov have **turned the Marshall Variation 4...e5 against the Anti-Grünfeld into a true gambit**. This does liven things up, but star players like Wesley So can't be impressed so easily. The latest cry in this interesting line is the American's 'simple move' 7.♘d3, which he used to beat Mamedyarov in Zagreb this year. You can find So's extensive analysis in David Cummings' Survey on page 223.



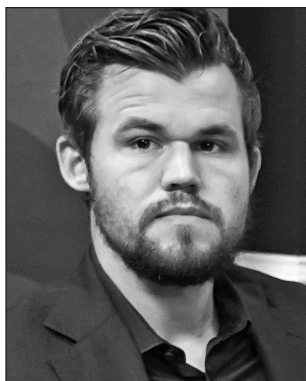
Vladimir Fedoseev

It's that little bishop move again. The subtle strategist Vladimir Fedoseev seems to have a preponderance for the strange-looking nudge ♗c1-d2. At the Poikovsky event, the young Russian **used this eccentric move twice to beat Esipenko and Sasikiran in the 6.d3 Ruy Lopez**. For one, it prevents Black's Chigorin option of putting his queen's knight on a5. But of course there is more to 8.♗d2 than that, and Tibor Fogarasi explains it in his Survey on page 94.

Pal Benko

Sadly, the legendary Pal Benko passed away this year at the venerable age of 91. Just before he died, a group of Hungarian chess players organized a **Benko Gambit theme tournament** in Budapest to pay him homage, and the man himself was there. Co-organizer Andras Adorjan was even inspired to play his first games since 20 years! The Survey by Adorjan and Endre Vegh on page 217 is dedicated to Benko, and to the line 4.♘c3 b4 5.♗a4 d6, played several times in this event which was won by Imre Balog.





Magnus Carlsen

The World Champion is not what you would call a sitting duck. He is constantly ahead of his rivals with new opening lines. In St Louis he switched from 4...dxc6 (his choice against Caruana in the 2018 match) to **the provocative 4...bxc6 in the Rossolimo Sicilian**. After the Sinquefeld Cup the Norwegian switched yet again – to 2...d6. But us mortals still want to know what 4...bxc6 is all about, for example after White's reply 5.d4. To that end we should read Jan Timman's Survey on page 59.

Shakhriyar Mamedyarov

In the dynamic Grünfeld Indian Defence, still a favourite with many top players, you have to be prepared to switch. That's just what Shakhriyar Mamedyarov did in **the venomous Exchange Grünfeld with 7. ♖a4+**. With black he had been playing a waiting game after 7... ♗d7, but at the Riga Grand Prix he switched to White and promptly caused trouble for expert Maxime Vachier-Lagrave with 8. ♗a3!?. Great flexibility! See Abhijeet Gupta's Survey on page 186.



Daniil Dubov

You've come across the young Russian elsewhere on this page already. Dubov's opening creativity seems to know no bounds. His handling of the QGD against Anish Giri in their Moscow Grand Prix match skimmed along no less than three other openings, making the material extremely complicated to master. Enter Ivan Sokolov (Survey on page 148), **the perfect author to cut such Gordian opening knots** for the reader. To top it off we have Dubov's own analysis of this epic game.

Jari Järvenpää

Jari Järvenpää (not the race-driver but the Finnish chess FM, of course) is **a fan of the pert 3...c5 line against the Advance Caro-Kann**. He's made a very interesting discovery in the troublesome line with 4.dxc5 and 5.a3, not recapturing the pawn immediately but first starting a weird knight dance to achieve a better development of his pieces. It just might solve a lot of Black's problems in this variation – it already did so for Järvenpää himself! See his debut Survey on page 81.



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HOT! = a trendy line or an important discovery

SOS = an early deviation

GAMBIT = a pawn sacrifice in the opening

Going wild

The FORUM is a platform for discussion of developments in chess opening theory in general and particularly in variations discussed in previous Yearbook issues.

Contributions to these pages should be sent to: editors@newinchess.com

Fabulous Firouzja

by Peter Boel

VO 17.4 (A51) YB 20, 65, 89, 95

There is a strange FIDE rule that says that if you play a match and if you have already won it, then the final game(s) of that match is (are) not rated. In 2016 this became a topic in one of the Hooegeveen matches, when Nigel Short had already beaten Hou Yifan, and then made sure he couldn't lose any rating points in the final game. This doesn't sound very cocky, but then again your concentration tends to slacken if victory is already in the pocket. Short duly lost that final game to Hou Yifan. When new chess superstar Alireza Firouzja (2700+ at 16) had already won his match with Jorge Cori Tello this year at 3½-1½ in truly fabulous style, he asked chief arbiter Frans Peeters to verify that their final game would indeed not be rated. When Peeters affirmed this, the Iranian said 'OK, then we can go wild tomorrow!' And that's what happened.

Jorge Cori Tello Alireza Firouzja

Hooegeveen m 2019 (6)

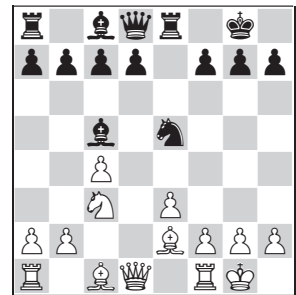
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4

Now Firouzja paused, looked to the left for a second, and then played.

2...e5!?

Keeping his word!

**3.dxe5 ♘g4 4.♘f3 ♙c5 5.e3
♘c6 6.♘c3 0-0 7.♙e2 ♞e8
8.0-0 ♘xe5 9.♘xe5 ♘xe5**



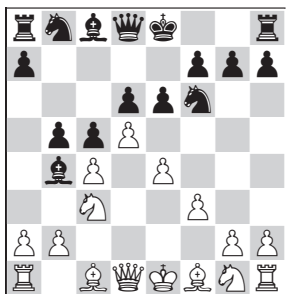
10.b3

Cori Tello was visibly surprised by his Iranian opponent's opening choice, but he does follow the main line. Alternatives are 10.a3, 10.♙d2, 10.♙h1 and the sharp 10.f4!?

10...a5!?

The preparation for an audacious plan, invented by Romanian IM Dolfi Drimer in the late 1960s. The queen's rook wants to move out to the kingside in a strange 'L-shaped' manoeuvre: ♞a8-a6-h6 or -g6, with a strong extra piece in the attack. One of the chess evergreens – highlighted by Viktor Moskalenko in his book *The Fabulous Budapest Gambit* (New In Chess – a New and Updated Edition came out in 2017). White can prevent Black's plan with either 11.♘a4 or 11.♘e4. In both cases Black is OK after 11...♙f8 – in Moskalenko's

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4
4.f3 c5 5.d5 d6 6.e4 b5!?



Michael Roiz: 'According to the database, this move was introduced by GM Leonid Yudasin in 1990'. However the text move can already be found in YB 19, p. 86: L. Szabo-Holm Pedersen, Varna ol 1962, seems to be the stem game. For the similar 5...0-0 6.e4 b5!?, see YB 132 page 22. **7.♗e2!?**

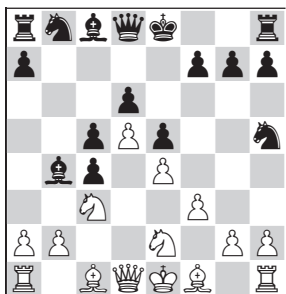
The most popular. Recently 7.♗d2 has received some attention, see e.g. Aronian-Carlsen, Douglas 2019.

7...bxc4 8.♗f4

Roiz: 'This is White's idea: he is willing to sacrifice a couple of tempos with his knight to provoke ...e6-e5 and thus secure his pawn centre, it has been played by 4.f3 specialist Sergey Volkov.'

8...e5 9.♗fe2 ♗h5!?N

9...♗bd7 is the common move.



I have found an interesting line here:

**10.h4 0-0! 11.g4 ♖f6!
12.gxh5 ♖xf3 13.♖h2**

If 13.♖g1 ♖xe4, the h4-pawn is hanging too.

13...f5 14.♗g2 ♖g4!

14...♖xh5 15.♗g3! looks dangerous for Black. He can try 15...♖g6 16.♗g5 f4 17.♗f5 ♖xf5! 18.exf5 ♗xf5 but 19.♗f3 drives the queen back.

15.♗g5

15.exf5 ♗xf5 16.h6 ♗a6!

17.hxg7 ♖f7 would give Black active play.

15...h6 16.♗e7

16.♗h3!? ♖xe4 17.♗e7 ♖f7

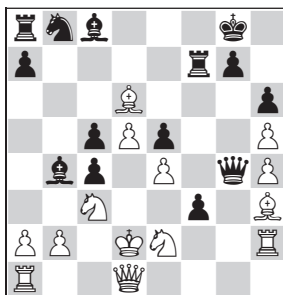
18.♗g2 ♖d3! 19.♗xd6 f4

20.♗xd3 cxd3 21.a3 ♗a5

22.♗g1 ♗f5! and ...♗d7, again with good compensation.

16...♖f7 17.♗xd6 f4 18.♗d2 f3

19.♗h3



19...♗xc3+!

Also good seems to be

19...♖xe4! 20.♗xc8 ♗d7

21.♗xd7 ♖xd7 22.♖c2 (22.♗c1

♖e3+ 23.♖d2 ♖xd2+

24.♗xd2 fxe2 25.♖xe2=.

20.bxc3 ♖xe4 21.♗xc8 ♗d7!

And again Black is OK due to the awkward situation of the d6-bishop, e.g.

22.♗b7 ♖d8 23.♗c7 ♗f6 24.d6

24.♗xd8? ♗g4 25.♖h3 ♖e3+

26.♗c2 ♖xb7 with a winning attack.

24...fxe2

If 24...♖xb7 25.♗xd8 ♖b2+

26.♗e1 fxe2 27.♖c1!! equalizes.

25.♗xe4 exd1 ♖+ 26.♖xd1

♗xe4+

26...♖xc7? 27.♗d5+.

27.♗c2 ♖dd7 28.♖d5=

With best wishes

Rafał Ogiewka,
Nysa, Poland

More Fischer material!

by René Olthof

SI 13.12 (B87)

YB 26

In a series of four articles on the German ChessBase website, later translated into English: <https://en.chessbase.com/post/bobby-fischer-1970-the-forgotten-simul>, hitherto unknown material has been presented from a simultaneous exhibition by Bobby Fischer in Münster, Germany, immediately after the Siegen 1970 Olympiad. It contains a spectacular victory against Ferdinand Middendorf, not incorporated in standard Najdorf theory today, which I had seen before on the Internet. It made me wonder: who is Ferdinand Middendorf?

The 1969 BRD Jugendmeister, now sunk into chess oblivion, was born in 1950. Middendorf got acquainted with the game in 1963 when his sister was presented a chessboard. He joined the local chess club in 1965 but never played much because he prioritized his academic career. His only participation in the German national youth championship, in 1969 in Hamburg just before he went to university, resulted in a surprise win (+10 =6 -1) which entitled him to enter the 8th Niemeyer Tournament in Groningen (22.12.1969 – 9.1.1970), in those days the premier European junior event which was soon afterwards transformed into the European Junior Championship. Middendorf ended in 8th place in the B-group, won by his compatriot Ulrich Schulze. Mind you: Andras Adorjan took the gold

A whole new level

by Erwin I'Ami



In this column, Dutch grandmaster and top chess coach Erwin I'Ami scours the thousands of new correspondence games that are played every month for important novelties that may start new waves in OTB chess also. Every three months it's your chance to check out the best discoveries from this rich chess source that tends to be underexposed.

MVL spots the move

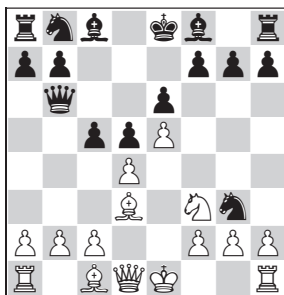
CK 1.6 (B10)

Just a few weeks after my deadline for Yearbook 132, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave adopted an amazing move I recommended there.

Maxime Vachier-Lagrave
Hikaru Nakamura

St Louis 2019 (9)

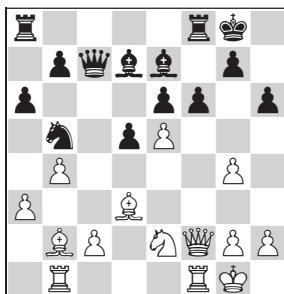
1.e4 c6 2.♘f3 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6
4.e5 ♘e4 5.♘e2 ♖b6 6.d4 e6
7.♘g3 c5 8.♘d3 ♘xg3



The refutation:

9.fxg3!

The move I consider to be the refutation of 3...♘f6 in the Caro-Kann Two Knights.
9...cxd4 10.0-0 ♘c6 11.♖e2 h6
12.a3 ♘d7 13.g4 ♘e7 14.b4
a6 15.♖b1 ♘a7 16.♘b2 ♘b5
17.♖f2 ♖c7 18.♘xd4 0-0
19.♘e2 f6



Hikaru Nakamura actually managed to get away with a draw when MVL missed a big chance here.

20.♖e3 fxe5 21.♘xe5 ♘d6
22.♘xd6 ♘xd6 23.g5 ♘f5
24.♘xf5 exf5 25.gxh6 ♖ae8
26.♖d2 ♖b6+ 27.♘d4 ♖xh6
28.♖xh6 gxh6 29.♖f3 ♖e4
30.c3 ♘g7 31.h3 h5 32.♖b1
♘g6 33.g3 ♖c8 34.♘h2 b6
35.h4 f4 36.gxf4 ♘g4 37.♖d3
♘f6 38.♖f2 ♖e7 39.♘f3
♘f5 40.♖xd5 ♖xc3 41.♘g5
♖c6 42.a4 ♖ec7 43.b5 axb5
44.axb5 ♖c2 45.♘g2 ♖xf2+
46.♘xf2 ♖c2+ 47.♖e3 ♖c3+
48.♘d2 ♖c2+ 49.♘d1 ♖c4
50.♖d6+ ♖e7 51.♖xb6 ♖xf4
52.♖b7+ ♘d7 53.♘d2 ♖xh4
54.♘e3 ♖b4 55.♘e4 ♖xb5
56.♖xb5 ♖xb5 57.♘g3 h4
58.♘f5+ ♘f6 59.♘xh4 ½-½
20.♖h4! ♖d8 21.♖h5 ♖e8
22.♖h3! would have been
very powerful, as 22...fxe5
23.g5! ♘xg5 24.♖xf8+ ♘xf8
25.♖xe5 gives White a major
initiative. 15.g5!? also came
into consideration, when 15...
hxcg5 16.♘xg5 ♘d8 17.♖g4
looks dangerous.
It would be interesting to
know if MVL found the
idea independently or
was inspired by the same
correspondence game we
looked at in YB 132!
All in all I believe the verdict
that 3...♘f6 is in big trouble,
still stands.

Advance French reappraised

FR 3.3 (C02)

As you will know by now,
I always like to see how

OTB grandmasters fare in correspondence chess. In principle the fact that they possess a better understanding of the game should tell, but they also have to be able to work well with the computer. In the previous Yearbook we saw a model game by Krishnan Sasikiran, but this time a fellow grandmaster was less fortunate.

Matjaz Pirs

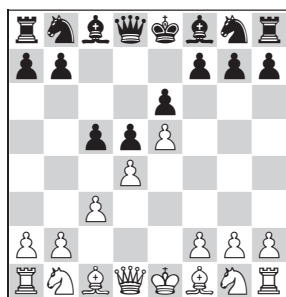
Danyil Dvirnyy

WS/GMN/A/2 ICCF, 20.05.2019

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5

Under the leadership of Maxime Vachier-Lagrave we are currently witnessing a bit of a revival of the Advance Variation. The lines are – for modern standards – relatively unexplored, compared to 3.♘c3 and 3.♘d2.

3...c5 4.c3



4...♘c6

4...♞b6 5.♘f3 ♘d7 is one set-up that was always considered strategically sound for Black, who intends to swap his bad bishop on b5. But in fact it is not that easy for Black after 6.♘e2, for example:

A) 6...♘b5 7.dxc5 ♘xc5 8.b4! is an important tactical point, when 8...♘xf2+ 9.♔f1 ♘c6 10.a4 a6 11.♘a3 ♘e3 (11...♞a7 12.♘c2 ♘b6 saves the bishop temporarily but now 13.b5! ♘d7 14.a5! wins on the spot) 12.a5 ♞a7 13.b5!



Matjaz Pirs

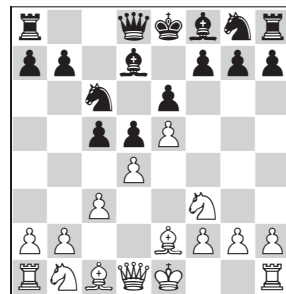
axb5 14.♘xb5 ♘xb5 15.♘xb5+ ♔f8 (15...♘c6 16.♘xe3 ♞xe3 17.a6! ♞a7 18.♘d4 ♘ge7 19.♞b1! wins material as there is no stopping axb7 followed by ♘xc6) 16.♔e2 ♘xc1 17.♞xc1 ♘e7 18.♞a3 ♘a6 19.♞hf1 gives White tremendous compensation. Black should perhaps retreat the bishop on move 8, but that would indicate things have indeed gone wrong;

B) 6...cxd4 7.cxd4 ♘b5 8.♘c3 ♘xe2 9.♘xe2! ♘e7 10.0-0 ♘ec6 11.♘f4 ♘e7 12.h4 is not that easy for Black, as White will slowly build an initiative on the kingside. In the past it was thought that Black could play more or less any set-up: ...♞b6/...♘d7, ...♞b6/...♘c6 and ...♘c6/...♘d7. That seems no longer to be the case, and a reappraisal of the entire Advance Variation is long overdue!

5.♘f3 ♘d7

It is possible that this, already, is slightly inaccurate. Instead, 5...♞b6 has always been the most reliable move. Now both 6.♘e2 cxd4 7.cxd4 ♘h6 8.♘xh6 ♞xb2 9.♘bd2 gxh6 10.0-0 ♘xd4 11.♞b1 ♘xe2+ 12.♞xe2 and 6.a3 ♘h6 (6...c4!?) 7.b4 cxd4 8.♘xh6 gxh6 9.cxd4 ♘d7 are critical directions.

6.♘e2



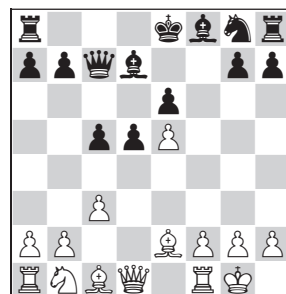
Dvirnyy's gamble

6...f6

A) 6...♘h6 7.♘xh6 gxh6 8.0-0 ♘g7 holds some potential for Black with his bishop pair. The most played move here is 9.♘a3 and after 9...0-0 10.♘c2 cxd4 11.cxd4 f6! this is perfectly reasonable for Black. Stronger is 9.♘bd2! 0-0 10.♘b3 b6 11.a4 c4 (11...f6 would just lose a pawn after 12.exf6 followed by 13.dxc5) 12.♘bd2 f6 13.exf6 ♞xf6 and now 14.b3! secures a structural advantage;

B) 6...♘ge7 7.0-0 ♘g6 is an often used set-up that has never appealed to me. White has the better chances after 8.g3 ♘e7 9.h4 0-0 10.h5 ♘h8 11.dxc5 ♘xc5 12.c4! as played in Timman-Ljubojevic, Amsterdam 1999, a game won by Timman in great style. Dvirnyy's continuation is likely the most ambitious one Black has available, but it also contains a great deal of risk.

7.0-0 fxe5 8.♘xe5 ♘xe5 9.dxe5 ♘c7

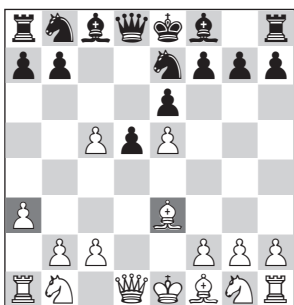


10.♞e1

An amazing knight pair

by Jari Järvenpää

- | | | |
|----|----------------|------------|
| 1. | e4 | c6 |
| 2. | d4 | d5 |
| 3. | e5 | c5 |
| 4. | dxxc5 | e6 |
| 5. | a3/ ♖e3 | ♘e7 |



I have been playing the Caro-Kann with black for many years. The opening theory has developed a lot in some variations. Already some years ago I wanted to avoid all the detailed theory of the Advance Variation starting with 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♖f5. Lots of games started this way, which made me think: 'Why play 3...♖f5 if players on the white side have studied it so well that they can't be surprised in a practical game?'

Why 3...c5 ?

I always had some faith in the less popular 3...c5 because occasionally I also play the French Defence. I believed there was more to that position after 3...c5! than just a simple tempo loss for Black. Breaking the pawn chain c3/d4/e5 with d4xc5 has a downside: it weakens e5. When the line 4.dxc5 e6 5.a3 became very popular, the results were surprisingly great for White. Players on the black side

tried different ideas, but nothing seemed to work well enough. In the middlegame the strategy was to activate the weak ♗c8 with ...f7-f6, but the right moves to accomplish this were not found. White just enjoyed his space advantage, and his army was quite ready for action whatever Black tried. Personally, positionally speaking I never liked taking the pawn with 5...♗xc5 due to 6.b4. 5...♘c6 didn't make much of a difference and 5...♙c7?! was just a waste of time because the new square for the queen may not be the best after all. I certainly was experiencing some difficulties as Black. However recent games have proved that the chances are quite equal after 5...♗xc5. The only problem seems to be that there are too many ideas and move orders White may use. In a practical game White is more likely to be able to use his preparation than Black is.

The 'Gambit line'

Later on, after trying 5...♙c7?! and some other dubious ideas I examined a lot of games starting with **5.a3 ♗xc5**. The common route for the ♘g8 was g8-e7-g6, which made me wonder if the mysterious move 5...♘e7 could work. **Question 1:** What are the pros and cons of 5...♘e7 compared to the more popular 5...♗xc5 ?

Answer:

Cons: Black has to know a lot of concrete moves to get compensation for the pawn after 6.b4, e.g. opening the queenside with ...a7-a5 and ...b7-b6.

Pros: White usually has to make positional concessions to defend his pawn and Black's pieces will be more active than after 5...♙xc5.

In the opening phase it is a well-known principle to move those pieces first which don't have any reasonable alternative squares. Let's call this 5.a3 ♘e7 line the '**Gambit line**', since usually here Black searches for active play rather than grabbing the pawn back.

The 'Knight Pair line'

5.♙e3 ♘e7 is also a different way to play this line than the more common 5...♘h6. I call this version with 5...♘e7 the 'Knight Pair line' because the black knights work well together as a pair and are the main sources of counterplay for Black.

Question 2: What are the relevant differences between 5...♘e7 and 5...♘h6 ?

Answer: After 5...♘e7 the knight has different squares to go to: c6 and f5. A less decent option is the g6-square. 5...♘e7 may transpose to ...♘h6 lines, but the opposite is not the case.

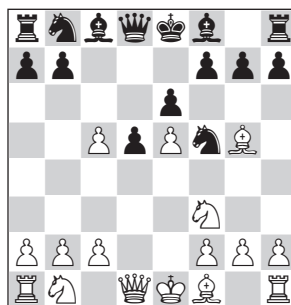
A common placement of the knights is especially on e7 and d7, but sometimes also on d7 and c6. The Knight Pair line is related to 5.♙e3 ♘h6. Previously 5...♘h6 was a very popular move, and it was deeply analysed by IM Jovanka Houska in her book *Opening repertoire: the Caro-Kann* (Everyman Chess 2015). This is one of my favourite opening books of all time. The natural further development of the ♘h6 is to f5. Let's call the ...♘g8-h6-f5 manoeuvre **Houska's line**, where Black trades off the bishop on e3 or d4.

These two different lines involve different strategies. The lines are related insofar as sometimes Black should

transpose from the Knight Pair line to Houska's line.

A) A clear transposition occurs when the game begins with 6.c3 and continues 6...♘f5, which is perfectly fine for Black and has been played many times in the line with 5...♘h6 and 6...♘f5. However, I have a different option for Black, namely 6...♘d7. The idea behind this move is to provoke White to make more positional concessions, such as b2-b4 or ♙b5 – the white bishop is not enjoying itself here. There is another option for White after 5...♘e7:

B) 6.♘f3, striving for rapid development and hoping to strike in the centre. If Black now wastes too much time, White will achieve some advantage with the move c2-c4! which is very typical in this position. If it is White's lucky day, his pieces will be rolling all over the board because the position will be opened. Black has to develop quickly with 6...♘f5 (and not with 6...♘d7 7.c4!) with better prospects to equalize. Here I am suggesting different moves than Houska did. White may test Black's position with 7.♙g5 as Houska mentions.



However, instead of 7...♙c7 (or 7...♙a5+) I prefer 7...♙e7 8.♙xe7 ♘xe7!. The move 7...♙e7 is in the spirit of the Knight Pair line since Black's two knights will be standing side by side on e7 and d7. This may sound confusing, but Houska's line

includes the trade of White's bishop on e3 or d4 and not on e7 (for Black's bishop!).

Finally

Is it already confusing enough with horses wildly hopping around in different directions? Unfortunately there is still one more important detail, so please hold your horses (or don't, if you play as Black)! Recent games have seen 5.♘e3 ♘d7. This last move by Black is the most popular today. You may wonder how this is related to ...♘e7? Well, after 5...♘d7 there are some different decent options for White, but the first player often opts for 6.♘b5. Maybe you can guess the follow-up? Certainly – 6...♘e7



Jovanka Houska

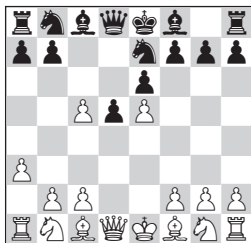
again! However, to my taste it just feels like a waste of army resources for White to play 6.♘b5, even if he loses his nerves with that evil pair of black horses!

The Gambit line 5.a3 ♘e7

Jere Lindholm
Jari Järvenpää

Helsinki 2018 (1)

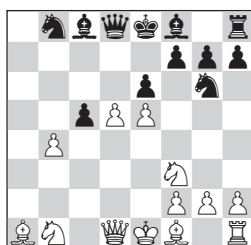
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5 e6
5.a3 ♘e7!



With this surprising move Black is interested in developing the ♘g8 to g6 where it often also goes if Black first plays ...♘xc5. The common hint is to first develop the pieces that have the least alternatives. Black is interested in taking the e5-pawn, which gives White a space advantage. White will have a hard time defending this pawn without b2-b4 and ♘c1-b2. I have been surprised that Black often plays ...f7-f6 although White's pieces are more active on the kingside due to his edge in space.

My new idea avoids the problems Black usually has in this system:

- 1) Black has problems with the development of the ♘c8;
 - 2) The black army doesn't have enough space;
 - 3) White's bishop on b2 will be a very powerful piece;
- And, related to points 1 and 3:
- 4) The only way for Black is to play ...f7-f6, which on the other hand makes the ♘b2 even more powerful. However, Black seems to be able to equalize. Against 5...♘e7 White may play b2-b4 sooner or later, but Black will always answer with ...a7-a5, destroying the queenside structure. Logically Black should play on the queenside with White's bishop on b2.
- 6.♘f3 ♘g6 7.b4 a5 8.♘b2 axb4
9.axb4 ♖xa1 10.♘xa1 b6 11.c4
bxc5 12.cxd5

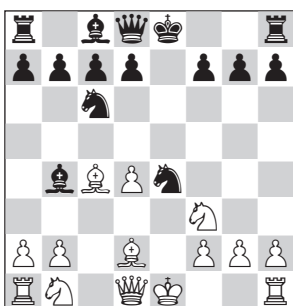


12...♞xd5 12...exd5 would be a safer choice: 13.♘c3 (13.bxc5 ♘xc5 14.♘b5+ ♘d7 15.♞a4 is also even (15.♞xd5?? ♞a5+ 16.♞d2 ♞xb5--): 13...d4 14.♘e4 ♞b6 (14...♞d5 15.♘xc5 ♘xc5 16.bxc5 ♞e4+) 15.bxc5 ♘xc5 16.♘xc5 ♞a5+ 17.♘d2 ♞xc5 18.♞a4+ ♘c6 19.♘b5 0-0! 20.0-0= (20.♘xc6? – watch out, back-rank check! 20...♞c1+ 21.♞d1 ♞xc6+ 22.0-0 ♘b7 with an attack) 20...♘gxe5 with a very drawish game. 13.♞xd5 13.♞a4+ ♘d7 (if 13...♘d7? 14.b5± Black has problems to develop the ♘d7 and the ♘b8 to more active squares) 14.♘c3 ♞b7=. After Black has castled he will be free to develop his pieces. White doesn't have enough pieces for an attack. 13...exd5 14.♘c3 ♘e6 For some reason I thought a white knight on d5 would cause too much damage. 14...cxb4 is the best way to play. Black will have time to castle after 15.♘xd5 ♘c5=. 15.♘b5+ A great tempo! 15...♘d7 16.bxc5 16.0-0! White should sacrifice the pawn, because he is able to attack the black king which is still in the centre. Black no longer has time to castle due to problems on the a4-e8 diagonal: 16...cxb4 17.♘a4±.

A hairy queenless middlegame

by Michael Adams

- | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------|
| 1. | e4 | e5 |
| 2. | ♘f3 | ♘c6 |
| 3. | ♙c4 | ♙c5 |
| 4. | c3 | ♘f6 |
| 5. | d4 | exd4 |
| 6. | cxd4 | ♙b4+ |
| 7. | ♙d2 | ♘xe4 |



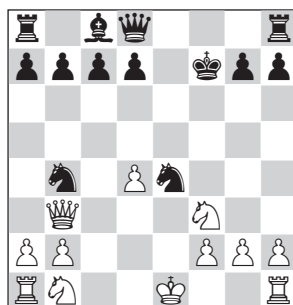
The simplifying line 4.c3 ♘f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♙b4+ 7.♙d2 has become more common recently. It should be noted that if Black is particularly bothered by this possibility it can be dodged straight away with 3...♘f6, but that is of course a different story.

The older main line continued 7...♙xd2+ 8.♘bxd2 d5 9.exd5 ♘xd5 10.♙b3 ♘a5 11.♙a4+ ♘c6 12.♙b3 with a repetition. A theoretically satisfactory response, but recently some white players have headed down this path, putting the onus on Black to avoid an immediate end to the game. Not the most fighting approach, but cynicism can be quite effective. Leaving the merits and morals of that continuation aside, this Survey will focus on Black avoiding this line early on by varying with 7...♘xe4. Now play



Levon Aronian

continues 8.♙xb4 ♘xb4 9.♙xf7+ (the game Belyakov-Shirov shows a good way for Black to counter the innocuous 9.♙b3) 9...♙xf7 10.♙b3+.

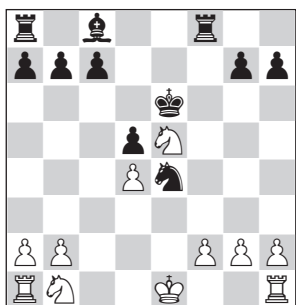


Now Black has a choice. Due to the precarious position of his king, swapping queens appeals, so there are two related options which have become the most common in practice. Firstly 10...♙f8 11.♙xb4+ ♙e7 12.♙xe7+ ♙xe7 – this costs Black a little time, but has the important advantage that a later ...d7-d6 will prevent White's knight landing on e5, and leaves the only remaining bishop with more scope. However, White

will maintain a space advantage, and Black's king will soon have to withdraw to the first rank, meaning completing development will take more time. The extra time spent moving the black king means that care will be required. I took this option in my first outing with this line, a theoretically relevant swift draw with Nick Pert in the British Championship in 2016.

The second choice varies with 10...d5 11. ♖e5+ ♔e6. This has been played routinely by highly rated players, but 11... ♖g8 12. ♗xb4 ♗g5! is a position that deserves further exploration.

After 11... ♖e6 12. ♗xb4 ♗f8 (12...c5 should be mentioned here, but it has fallen out of fashion due to 13. ♗a3 cxd4 14. ♖f3, where Black may be okay, but winning chances will be hard to find) 13. ♗xf8 ♖xf8. This was the choice of Levon Aronian in Wijk aan Zee in 2014, which brought it to prominence; the repetition of the variation in the following year's event was a notable vote of confidence.



I essayed this against Jack Rudd in the opening round of this year's British Championship, although this decision was more due to over-the-board spontaneity than in-depth opening research. Jack continued with the most common 14.f3. Here Black can choose between three sensible knight

withdrawals, all of which have highly rated advocates.

Before we consider those, I would be remiss not to mention the highly entertaining 14...c5! here, which featured in Zeng Chongsheng-Xiu Deshun. It could come as an unpleasant shock and deserves some more outings. To me, with the queens swapped it seems like a better moment to give this concept a try if you can't resist the direct approach to undermining White's knight at all costs. However, whilst this variation burns bright, it might fizzle out quickly, and White seems to have an edge with best play, so let's contemplate the more obvious retreats, which seem a sensible way to play for a win without excessive risk – a lengthy challenging endgame duel lies ahead.

One option is 14... ♖f6, which leaves the knight dominated by the pawn on f3, but a later ... ♖d7 will challenge White's best placed piece – a solid way to continue which looks fairly safe. 14... ♖d6 is another in my opinion slightly better version of this idea, as the knight has more options, either to settle on f5 or drop back to f7 to challenge the white knight. This also looks likely to lead to balanced play.

I chose perhaps the most combative option 14... ♖g5. f7 is still a possible destination, but only if White forces this with h2-h4. Black's main idea is to play ... ♖d6 followed by ... ♖e6. In general in these positions White clearly has the easier play earlier on as his development is swift and harmonious, but if Black manages to avoid short-term accidents new horizons will eventually open for his bishop, and his centralized advanced king could prove handy. Still, playing around the monster knight on e5 can be

hazardous in practice, and if White can find a way to create threats things can get very hairy.

One key positional manoeuvre for Black in both these lines is to play ...a7-a5, and possibly then ...a5-a4. As well as gaining queenside space and hoping to encourage White to make a commitment to his queenside structure, this allows the black rook to mobilize via a6 or a5, sometimes it can target b2 or control the 5th rank, and otherwise completing development isn't easy. An unusual feature of this line is that this deployment can often be recommended after both 10...♖f8 and 10...d5. Frequently the bishop on c8 is

as well placed on its starting square as anywhere else, as it covers just as many relevant squares and is less of a target than if it emerges.

Conclusion

At the moment the line 7...♘e4 seems like a good alternative for Black both theoretically and as a fighting option, and the results of the games in this Survey are certainly encouraging for Black! Although the number of games in this variation is increasing, there are still lots of rare and relatively unexplored options, so we can expect further developments in the future.

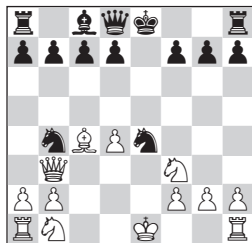
Early deviation

9. ♖b3

Bogdan Belyakov
Alexei Shirov

St Petersburg Wch rapid 2018 (1)

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5
4.c3 ♗f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♖b4+
7.♗d2 ♗xe4 8.♗xb4 ♗xb4 9. ♖b3



9... ♖e7 10.0-0 d5! 10...0-0 11.♗e1
(11.♗c3!?) 11...d5. 11.♗xd5 ♗xd5
12.♗xd5 0-0 13.♗e1 ♗f6! 14. ♖c5
♖xc5 14... ♖d8!? 15.♗c3 ♗g4
16.♗e5 ♗e6 17.♗d1 c6. 15.dxc5
♗g4 16.♗e5 ♗d8 16... ♗e6!?.
17.♗c3 17.♗xg4 ♗xg4. 17...♗d2
17... ♗e6. 18.b4 ♗e6 19.a3 ♗fd8
19...a6!, stopping ♗b5, was safer.
20.♗b5 ♗e8 21.♗xa7 c6 22.b5
22.♗axc6!? bxc6 23.♗xc6 looks
more fun for White. 22...cxb5
23.♗xb5 ♗d5 24.♗ac1 ♗c8 25.f4
g6. 26.♗f2 ♗dxc5 27.♗xc5 ♗xc5
28.♗d4 ♗c7 29.g3 ♗g7 30.h4

♗d5 31.♗e2 ♗e6 32.♗d2 ♗xd4
33.♗xd4 f6 34.♗d7 ♗c2+ 35.♗e3
♗e6 36.♗d6 ♗f7 37.a4 ♗e7 0-1

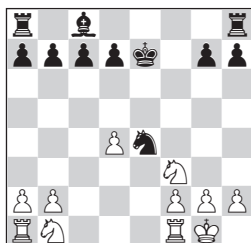
10...♖f8

Gawain Jones

Leinier Dominguez Perez

Hengshui blitz 2019 (15)

1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.♗f3 ♗c6
4.♗c4 ♗c5 5.c3 ♗f6 6.cxd4 ♖b4+
7.♗d2 ♗xe4 8.♗xb4 ♗xb4 9.♗xf7+
♗xf7 10. ♖b3+ ♗f8 11. ♖xb4+
♗e7 12. ♗xe7+ ♗xe7 13.0-0



13...♗f6 13...♗e8 allows the forcing
line 14.♗e1 ♖f8 (14... ♗d8?! 15.♗e5)
15.♗a3 ♗f6 16.♗b5 ♗d5 17.♗xe8+
♗xe8 18.♗e1+ ♗f8 19.♗c1 c6 20.♗d6
♗e7 21.♗f5+ (21.♗e4!? d6 22.♗e1
looks tricky for Black) 21...♗f6
22.♗d6 with a repetition. 14.♗c3
d6 15.♗fe1+ ♗d8 16.d5 ♗d7

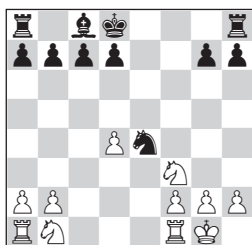
17.♗d4 ♗e8 18.f3 c5 18...♗xe1+!
19.♗xe1 c5, reducing material, was
better. 19.♗e6+ ♗xe6 20.dxe6
♗c7 20... ♗e7 looks natural, but
21.g4 g5 22.♗d1 ♗d8? 23.♗d5! is a
clever idea, e.g. 23...h6 (23...♗xd5?
24.♗xd5+ ♗f8 25.e7++-) 24.♗g2±.
21.♗d1 Black's king seems to
have plenty of pawn cover but
21.b4! is still not easy to meet, e.g.
21...cxb4 22.♗b5+ ♗c6 23.♗d4+
and the white knight is jumping.
21... ♗c6 22.g4 22.b4!. 22...g5
22...♗ad8!. 23.♗f2 23.e7! ♗d7
24.♗e5! ♗xe7 25.♗xc5 h6 26.♗f5±.
23...b5 23...♗e7!. 24.e7 24.b4!?. 24...
b4 25.♗e6 25.♗e4! ♗xe4+ 26.♗xe4
♗d7 27.♗e5±. 25...bxc3 26.♗xf6
cxb2 27.♗fxd6+ ♗c7 28.♗d7+
♗c8 29.♗d8+ ♗c7 30.♗d7+
♗c6 31.♗d6+ ♗c7 32.♗d7+
♗c6 33.♗d6+ ♗b5 34.♗xa8 b1 ♖
35.♗xe8 ♖b2+ 36.♗f1 ♖c1+
37.♗f2 ♖b2+ 38.♗e1? A sad end
to this entertaining blitz game;
38.♗f1=. 38... ♖e5+--+ 39.♗f2
♗xd6 40.♗g2 ♗a6 41.h4 gxh4
42.f4 ♖c6+ 0-1

Nicholas Pert
Michael Adams

Bournemouth ch-GBR 2016 (5)

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5
4.c3 ♗f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♖b4+

7. ♖d2 ♗xe4 8. ♖xb4 ♗xb4
9. ♖xf7+ ♗xf7 10. ♖b3+ ♗f8
11. ♖xb4+ ♖e7 12. ♖xe7+ ♗xe7
13. 0-0 ♖d8



14. ♖e1 ♗f6 15. ♖c3 d6 16. ♖g5 ♖f8 17. ♖e3 17.f3 a5!. The typical method of development to bring the rook into the game. The next few moves justify the idea perfectly as Luke swaps his knight for the bishop in any case, and Black avoids any loss of time which could occur after 17... ♖d7. 18. ♗f2 a4 19. ♖e6+ ♖xe6 20. ♖xe6 ♖d7 21. ♖e2 ♖a5 22. ♖a1 ♖f7 23.h3 h5 24.h4 ♖g4+ (Black had decent options to continue: 24... ♖d5!; 24...a3!? 25.b3 g5) 25. ♗g1 ♗f6 26. ♗f2 ♖g4+ 27. ♗g1 ♗f6 McShane-Matlakov, Batumi 2018. 17...h6 18. ♖ge4 ♗xe4 19. ♖xe4 ♖f5 20. ♖e3 Up to here we had (me inadvertently, Nick more knowledgeably) duplicated the correspondence game Van Leeuwen-Tinture, cr 2017, where the players decided to clean up their inboxes by agreeing to a draw here. We didn't extend matters unduly: 20... ♖d7 21. ♖a1 ♖a8 ½-½ With so much material disappearing I decided to save some energy, although the bishop is definitely the better minor piece here.

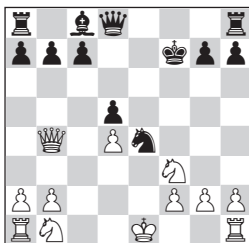
10...d5 11. ♖xb4

Marian Petrov
Alexey Goganov

Sweden int 2016/17 (4)

1.e4 e5 2. ♗f3 ♗c6 3. ♖c4 ♖c5
4.c3 ♗f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♖b4+
7. ♖d2 ♗xe4 8. ♖xb4 ♗xb4

9. ♖xf7+ ♗xf7 10. ♖b3+ d5
11. ♖xb4 11. ♖e5+ is the critical move. Now Black castles by hand and achieves easy and harmonious play.



11... ♖f8 12. ♖c3 ♖g8 13. ♗xe4 dxe4 13...a5!?. 14. ♖e5 ♖e6 15. 0-0 15. ♖xb7? ♖xd4. 15... ♖d6 16. ♖c3 16. ♖xb7?! ♖d5 17. ♖b5 ♖ab8 18. ♖a5 ♖xb2 19. ♖xa7? e3. 16... ♖ad8 17. ♖fd1 17. ♖ad1! looks more natural. 17... ♖f5 18. ♖c2 ♖df8 No need to move the rook again yet, 18... ♖d5!, aiming to swing the queen to the kingside, was stronger, e.g. 19. ♖ac1 c6 20. ♖c4 (20. ♖c5? ♖xc5 21. ♖xc5 ♖xa2) 20... ♖f4. 19. ♖d2 ♖d5 19... ♖g5!?. 20. ♖c3 20. ♖c4!. 20... c6 21.b4 ♖g5 21...e3!?. 22. ♖e3 h6 23. ♖b1 ♖e6 24.a4 a5 25.h4 ♖h5 26.bxa5 c5 27. ♖b5 ♖xh4 28. ♖xc5 ♖f5 29. ♖dc2 ♖fh5 30. ♗f1 ♖xe5 31.dxe5 ♖h1+ 32. ♗e2 ♖g4+ 33.f3 ♖xg2+ 34. ♖f2 exf3+ 35. ♖d3 ♖d1+ 36. ♖c3 ♖g5 37. ♖xd5 ♖xd5 38. ♖xf3 ♖xe5+ 39. ♖b3 ♖e6 40. ♖b2 ♖xa5 41. ♖xb7 ♖xa4 42. ♖c7 ♖a2+ 43. ♖c1 ♖a1+ 0-1

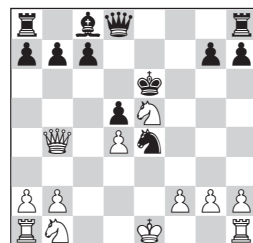
10...d5 11. ♖e5+ / 14... ♖d6

Pentala Harikrishna
Levon Aronian

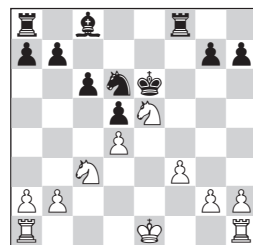
Wijk aan Zee 2014 (1)

1.e4 e5 2. ♗f3 ♗c6 3. ♖c4 ♖c5
4.c3 ♗f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♖b4+
7. ♖d2 ♗xe4 8. ♖xb4 ♗xb4 9. ♖xf7+ ♗xf7 10. ♖b3+
d5 11. ♖e5+ ♖e6 11... ♗g8! is definitely an easy move to underestimate: 12. ♖xb4 ♖g5! (12... ♖f8? 13. ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 14.f3±) 13. ♖b3! (13.0-0? ♖h3) 13...c6 14.0-0

h5 15. ♗f3 (15.f3 ♖d6 16.f4 ♖d8! 17. ♖d2 ♖b6; 15. ♖e1 ♖h6; 15.f4 ♖d8 16. ♖e1 ♖b6! (16... ♖d6!)) 15... ♖f6 16. ♖c3 ♖d6 17. ♖e5 looks a bit more comfortable for White. 12. ♖xb4



12... ♖f8 12...c5!? 13. ♖a3 cxd4 14. ♗f3 ♖f6 (14... ♖b6 15.0-0 ♗f7 (15... ♖e8 16. ♖a4±) 16. ♖d1 ♖e8 (16...d3!? 17. ♖e5+) 17. ♖xd4 ♖f6 18. ♖e3±; 14... ♗f7 15.0-0 ♖f6) 15.0-0 ♗f7 16. ♖d3 is probably critical. Although it's playable for Black, White's position looks preferable. 13. ♖xf8 ♖xf8 14. ♖c3 c6 14...c5!? 15. ♖b5 ♖b8 16. ♖c7+ ♖d6 17. ♖b5+=; 14... ♖xc3!? 15.bxc3 ♖d6. 15.f3 ♖d6



Transposing to the 14.f3 line. See next game. 16. ♗f2 ♗f5 17. ♖he1 ♖d6 18. ♖ad1 g6 19.b4 ♖d7 20. ♖a4 b6 21. ♖d2 ♖a8 22. ♖c3 ♖e7 23. ♖c1 ♖e8 24. ♖e2 ♖g7 24... g5!; 24...c5!?. 25. ♖e1 ♖e6 26. ♖c1 ♖f4 27. ♖e2 ♖f5 28. ♖c3 ♖f4 29. ♖e2 ♖f5 30. ♖c3 ♖f4 ½-½

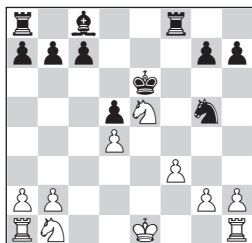
10...d5 11. ♖e5+ / 14... ♖g5

Jack Rudd
Michael Adams

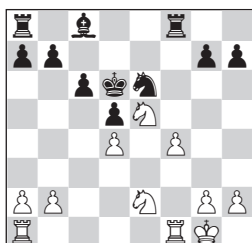
Torquay ch-GBR 2019 (1)

1.e4 e5 2. ♗f3 ♗c6 3. ♖c4 ♖c5
4.c3 ♗f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4

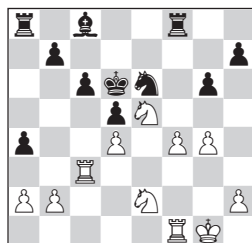
♠b4+ 7. ♠d2 ♠xe4 8. ♠xb4
♠xb4 9. ♠xf7+ ♠xf7 10. ♠b3+
d5 11. ♠e5+ ♠e6 12. ♠xb4 ♠f8
13. ♠xf8 ♠xf8 14. f3 ♠g5



15.0-0 15. ♠c3 c6 16. h4 (avoiding 16.0-0 ♠d6, allowing the knight to reach e6) 16...♠f7 17. ♠d3 ♠d6 18. ♠f2 ♠d8 (as White has lost time retreating her knight, Lev insists on the knight reaching e6; 18...♠f5!?, 18...b6!?) 19. g3 ♠e6 20. ♠e2 a5 (20...b6!?) 21. ♠df4 ♠a6 (21...♠c7!?) 22. ♠ad1 ♠b6 23. ♠d2 (23. ♠d3!?) 23...♠b4 24. ♠e1 ♠xf4 25. ♠xf4 ♠c4 26. a3 ♠f5 27. ♠e3 b6 28. ♠b3 b5 29. ♠e3 b4 30. ♠e2 h5 31. ♠e1 g6 32. b3 ♠c2 33. ♠xc2 ♠xc2 34. a4 ♠f5 35. ♠f4 ♠c8 36. ♠d2 c5 37. ♠e5 cxd4 38. ♠xd5+ ♠e7 39. g4 hxg4 40. fxg4 ♠xg4 41. ♠xg6+ ♠f6 42. ♠xd4 ♠e6 43. ♠d6 ♠f7 44. ♠e5+ ♠e7 45. ♠d3 ♠f6 46. ♠f3 ♠g8 47. ♠g5 ♠f5 48. ♠f3 ♠f6 49. h5 ♠c5 50. h6 ♠h5 51. ♠d6+ ♠e7 52. ♠a6 ♠xb3 53. h7 ♠xa4 54. ♠xa5 ♠xh7 55. ♠xa4 ½-½ Hou Yifan-Aronian, Wijk aan Zee 2015.
15...♠d6 16. ♠c3 c6 17. f4 ♠e6
 17...♠e4 18. ♠xe4+ dxe4 19. ♠c4+ (the computer suggests the sophisticated 19. ♠ae1 ♠d5 20. ♠c1 which suggests leading with your king may not be the wisest idea) 19...♠c5 (19...♠c7!) 20. ♠ac1±.
18. ♠e2



18...g6 18...b6, aiming to develop quickly, was simpler, e.g. 19. ♠ac1! (19. f5 ♠xd4 (19...♠g5! 20. ♠g3 c5) 20. ♠xd4 ♠xe5 21. ♠xc6+ ♠d6 22. ♠d4 ♠d7) 19...c5 (19...♠b7!?) 20. dxc5+ bxc5 21. b4 cxb4 22. ♠c6+ ♠e7 23. ♠e1±. **19. ♠ac1! a5 20. ♠c3 a4** A useful move but 20...♠a6! was more practical. **21. g4 21. ♠h3!?** ♠xd4!±, but now both ♠h3 and f4-f5 are looming.



21...♠a7? I couldn't figure out the complexities of 21...♠a5! 22. ♠h3 ♠b5 but it was the best option.
22. ♠h3 b6 23. f5! gxf5 24. gxf5?
 A) 24. ♠xf5 is better than the game, but after 24...♠xf5 25. gxf5 ♠xd4! 26. ♠xd4 ♠g7+! 27. ♠f2 ♠xe5 28. ♠xc6+ ♠xf5 White is worse;
 B) The best move is 24. ♠h6!, creating a second pin from a different direction: 24...♠g7 25. ♠g3! (25. ♠h1 c5 is less clear) 25...f4 26. ♠h1! This third preparatory move leaves everything ready to play ♠f5+ (26. ♠f5+? ♠xf5). Now 26...♠g5! (26...♠c7 27. ♠f5+—) is Black's best chance, and in practice there are chances to confuse matters, but after 27. ♠f5+ ♠xf5 28. gxf5 ♠xf5 29. ♠g2 c5 30. ♠f2! White is in control.
24...♠g7+± 25. ♠h1 25. ♠g3 ♠xg3+ 26. hxg3 ♠g5 27. g4 ♠a6 28. ♠f2 (28. ♠e1 c5 29. ♠g2 h5) 28...♠h3+. **25...♠f6!** With this calm move Black takes control of the situation. **26. ♠c1 ♠xd4 27. ♠xd4 ♠xe5 28. ♠xc6+ ♠d6 29. ♠d4 ♠xf5 30. ♠xf5+ 30. ♠c6+ ♠e7±** (30...♠e5? 31. ♠f3+!). **30...♠xf5 31. ♠h6+ ♠g6 32. ♠xh7 ♠f2 33. ♠hc7 33. ♠h4 b5 34. ♠b4 ♠gg2 35. ♠xb5 ♠xh2+ 36. ♠g1 ♠fg2+ 37. ♠f1 ♠xb2; 33. ♠a7 ♠gg2 34. ♠xa4 ♠xh2+ 35. ♠g1 ♠fg2+ 36. ♠f1**

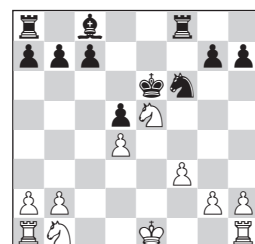
♠xb2. 33...♠gg2 34. ♠7c6+ ♠e5 35. ♠e1+ ♠f5—+ 36. ♠ce6 36. ♠d6 ♠xh2+ 37. ♠g1 ♠fg2+ 38. ♠f1 ♠d2. 36...♠xh2+ 37. ♠g1 ♠fg2+ 38. ♠f1 ♠xb2 0-1

10...d5 11. ♠e5+/ 14...♠f6

Bartosz Socko
Kacper Piorun

Warsaw ch-POL 2019 (7)

1.e4 e5 2. ♠f3 ♠c6 3. ♠c4 ♠c5 4. c3 ♠f6 5. d4 exd4 6. cxd4 ♠b4+ 7. ♠d2 ♠xe4 8. ♠xb4 ♠xb4 9. ♠xf7+ ♠xf7 10. ♠b3+ d5 11. ♠e5+ ♠e6 12. ♠xb4 ♠f8 13. ♠xf8 ♠xf8 14. f3 ♠f6



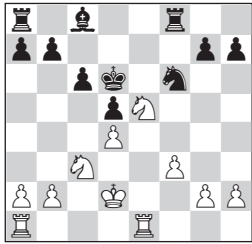
15. ♠c3 c6 16.0-0 ♠d6 17. g4 b6 18. ♠fe1 ♠d7 19. ♠g2 ♠xe5 20. ♠xe5 ♠f4 21. ♠e2 ♠f7 21...♠xd4! 22. ♠xd4 ♠xe5 23. ♠xc6+ ♠d6 24. ♠d4 ♠d7. 22. ♠e1 ♠d7 23. ♠g3 ♠af8 After 23...a5 24. ♠c3 sometimes a timely ♠a4 will make it awkward to defend b6. **24. f4 g6 25. b4 ♠a8 25...♠c8!** with the idea of ...♠a6. **26. ♠c3 ♠af8 27. ♠f1 27. ♠e2! 27...h5! 28. b5 28. gxf5 gxf5 29. ♠xh5? ♠g7+—+. 28...h4+ 28...hxg4! 29. bxc6 ♠xc6 30. ♠xd5 ♠h8±. 29. ♠xh4 ♠xf4 30. ♠xf4 ♠xf4 31. ♠g5 ♠xd4 32. ♠xg6+ ♠c5 32...♠c7! 33. bxc6 ♠xc6. 33. ♠g7 ♠d6 34. ♠g6+ ♠c5 35. ♠g7 ♠d6 ½-½**

Olexandr Bortnyk
Francisco Vallejo Pons

Wroclaw Ech rapid 2014 (9)

1.e4 e5 2. ♠f3 ♠c6 3. ♠c4 ♠c5 4. c3 ♠f6 5. d4 exd4 6. cxd4 ♠b4+ 7. ♠d2 ♠xe4 8. ♠xb4 ♠xb4 9. ♠xf7+ ♠xf7 10. ♠b3+ d5 11. ♠e5+ ♠e6 12. ♠xb4 ♠f8

13. ♖xf8 ♜xf8 14.f3 ♟f6 15. ♖d2
♟d6 16. ♟c3 c6 17. ♜he1

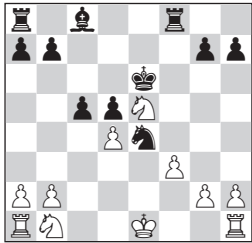


17...♟f5 I prefer 17...♟e6!. On f5 the bishop will be targeted by a timely g2-g4. 18. ♜e3 18.g4!? ♟e6 19. ♜e3 ♟d7 20. ♟d3±. 18...♟d7 19. ♜ae1 ♟xe5 20. ♜xe5 ♜f7 21. ♜1e3 ♜af8 22. ♟e2 b6 23.b4 ♟d7 24. ♜a3 ♜e8 25. ♜xa7 25. ♜xe8 ♟xe8 26.h4±. 25...♜xe5 26.dxe5+ ♟xe5 27. ♜b7 27. ♜a6!? b5 28.h4. 27...b5 28. ♟e3 ♟d6 29. ♟d4 ♜f8 30. ♜a7 g5 31.g3 ♜e8+ 32. ♟d3 ♜e1 33. ♜a6 ♟c7 34. ♜a7+ ♟d6 35. ♜a6 ♟c7 36. ♜a7+ ♟d6 37. ♜a6 ½-½

10...d5 11. ♟e5+ / 14...c5

Zeng Chongsheng
Xiu Deshun

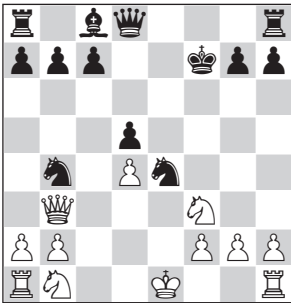
Xinghua ch-CHN 2014 (7)
1.e4 e5 2. ♟f3 ♟c6 3. ♟c4 ♟c5
4.c3 ♟f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4
♟b4+ 7. ♟d2 ♟xe4 8. ♟xb4
♟xb4 9. ♟xf7+ ♟xf7 10. ♜b3+
d5 11. ♟e5+ ♟e6 12. ♜xb4 ♜f8
13. ♜xf8 ♜xf8 14.f3 c5!?



15. ♟d3! 15.fxe4 dxe4! (15...cxd4?
16. ♟f3+-) 16. ♟c4 cxd4 and the
two central pawns balance the
piece: 17. ♟ba3 ♟d5 18. ♜d1 ♟e6

19. ♟e3+ ♟e5 20. ♟ac4+ ♟xc4
21. ♟xc4+ ♟d5 22. ♟e3+. 15...cxd4
16. ♟a3! 16.fxe4? dxe4 is even
worse now. 16...♟d6 17. ♟c2
17. ♟f2! looks pleasant for White,
e.g. 17...♟f6 (17...♟f5 18. ♟b5!)
18. ♜ad1±. 17...♟f5 18.g4 18. ♟d2
♟d6. 18...♟h4 19. ♟xd4+ ♟d6
20. ♜f1 ♟d7 21. ♟d2 ♜ac8 21...
g5!?, 21...♜ae8!?. 22.b3 g5 23.h3
♜f6 24.f4 gxf4 25. ♜xf4 ♜f4
26. ♟xf4 ♜f8 27. ♟e3 ♜e8+
28. ♟f2 ♜e4 29. ♟fe2 ♟g6 30. ♜d1
♟f4 31. ♟xf4 ♜f4+ 32. ♟g3
♜e4 33. ♟h4 ♟c5 34. ♟f3 ♟b5
35. ♟g5 d4 36. ♜c1+ ♟d6 37.a4
♟c6 38. ♟h4 ♟d5 39. ♟f5+ ♟e5
40. ♜c8 ♟xb3 41. ♜e8+ ♟e6
42. ♟g7 ♟d6 43. ♟f6 ♟d5 44. ♟f5+
♟c5 45. ♜xe4 ♟xe4 46. ♟e5 ♟g2
47. ♟xd4 ♟xh3 48.g5 ♟b4 49. ♟f6
♟f1 50. ♟e6 ♟d3 51. ♟d8 ♟xa4
52. ♟xb7 ♟b4 53. ♟e5 a5 54. ♟d4
♟c2 55. ♟e3 a4 56. ♟d2 ♟e4
57. ♟d6 a3 58. ♟c1 ♟d3 59. ♟b7
♟c3 60. ♟c5 ♟c2 0-1

Exercise 1



position after 10...d7-d5

Should White recapture the knight here?

(solutions on page 245)

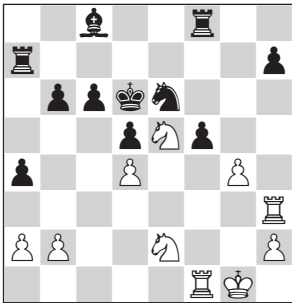
Exercise 2



position after 17.f2-f3

Which typical positional idea to complete development is appropriate here?

Exercise 3



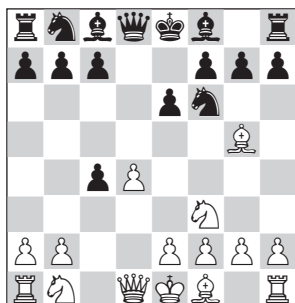
position after 23...g6xf5

How should White continue the attack in this complicated tactical position?

High-level move order tricks

by Ivan Sokolov (special contribution by Daniil Dubov)

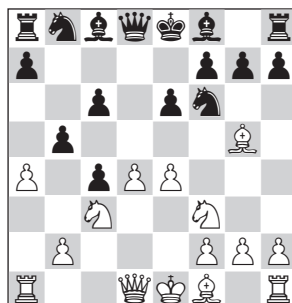
- | | | |
|----|-----|-------|
| 1. | d4 | ♘f6 |
| 2. | c4 | e6 |
| 3. | ♘f3 | d5 |
| 4. | ♙g5 | dx c4 |



Daniil Dubov

The main game

We start with 5.e4 b5. Black is willing to transpose to the Botvinnik Variation. We will go into this sideline in detail in Yearbook 134. Game 1 is our main game Dubov-Giri, with Dubov's comments. After 6.a4 c6 7.♘c3



Anish chose 7...b4, which Dubov calls 'not a real mistake yet'. Does White have a good way to avoid the Botvinnik? My answer will be: no. Please see Game 2, Nikolic-Müller, for 6.e5?!

Vienna deviations

Now let's focus on the situation after White's move 5.e4.

In this Survey we take a look at a slightly unusual move order in the Queen's Gambit Declined that Daniil Dubov used to defeat Anish Giri at the FIDE Grand Prix in Moscow 2019.

As it usually comes with opening move orders, the first (and most important!) question is: what are you trying to get, and what are you trying to avoid? Dubov is unfortunately (though we can easily understand him) not willing to share any info with us on this in the analysis of his game with Giri, so I was left guessing! It looks likely to me that on 4...h6 (instead of 4...dxc4) he wanted to play 5.♙xf6 and after 5...♙xf6 some other move rather than the main 6.♘c3 and get some 'specific version of the Moscow or Ragozin Variation'. In case of 4...♙b4+ (instead of 4...dxc4), perhaps he wanted to play 5.♘bd2 and get an unusual type of Ragozin. Anish Giri played arguably the most principled move, 4...dxc4, and so we got to the diagrammed position.

Can Black play 5...♙b4+ and force White to play 6.♘c3 and get to the Vienna Variation?

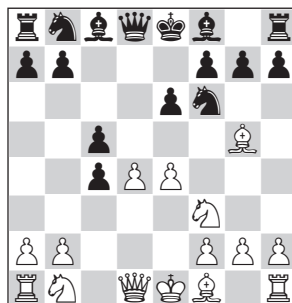
Well... perhaps White has an alternative in 6.♘bd2. A rare move, which transposes to a position usually reached via 4...♙b4+ 5.♘bd2!? and now 5...dxc4 6.e4.



This leads to the sacrifice of a pawn, or maybe even two pawns. See Game 3. Mamedyarov-Harikrishna is a blitz game, but given the fact that Mamedyarov repeated this idea vs Kasimdzhanov at the recent World Cup tournament, Shakhriyar must have definitely done some serious work there!

Now comes the second question: can Black use this move order and get acceptable play while avoiding the transpositions to either the Botvinnik or the Vienna Variation?

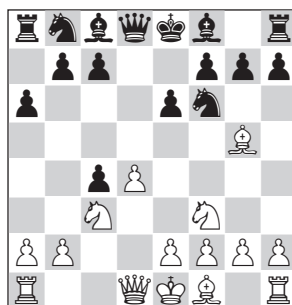
In Game 4, Lodici-Horvath, Black tried 5...h6 and after 6.♙xf6 ♔xf6 7.♙xc4 (instead of 7...♙b4+ 8.♘c3 c5, transposing to the Vienna Variation) tried the 'independent' 7...c5 (which was also Dominguez's choice vs Dubov). Lodici played better than Dubov (!) and got an opening advantage after 8.e5!. In Game 5, Teske-Recuero, Black played 5...c5!?. This avoids the transpositions to the main lines and (as it looks to me anyhow) gives Black good equalizing chances!



So, this extremely rare line 5...c5!? is certainly worth attention!

White deviates early (QO 16.9 – D24)

We end with Game 6, Van Wely-Van Foreest. I thought for a period of about 30 years (and obviously I was not the only one!) that after Black's 4...dxc4 White can reach the Vienna Variation in two different ways: by playing 5.e4 ♙b4+ 6.♘c3 or alternatively 5.♘c3 ♙b4 6.e4. Well... this happens not to be the case as Black (on 5.♘c3) has 5...a6!, immediately solving his opening problems (as seen in Game 6).



If White aggressively plays for an opening advantage (as Sjugirov and Van Wely did) he may easily find himself in terrible trouble!

It is also worth mentioning that with Dubov's move order White cannot enter Botvinnik main lines, as after 5.e4 b5, should White play 6.♘c3 Black does not reply 6...c6, transposing into the Botvinnik, but rather 6...a6!.

Conclusion

In our initial position, after 5.e4 Black has a basic choice between entering the Vienna Variation or the Botvinnik Variation.

Players looking for an ‘independent choice’ should explore 5...c5!? further (Teske-Recuero). The Vienna Variation

choice is 5...♖b4+. White players willing to deviate from the Vienna should explore 6.♘bd2!?, a move that, at the time of writing, has been played at top level only in the blitz game Mamedyarov-Harikrishna. Mamedyarov's idea involves the sacrifice of one or even more pawns.

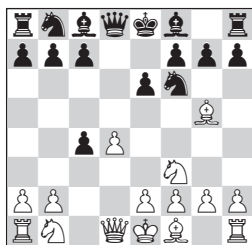
The main game 5.e4 b5

Daniil Dubov
Anish Giri

Moscow 2019 (1.2)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♙f3 d5

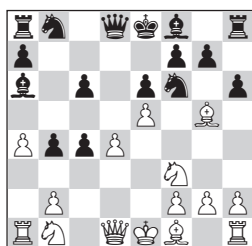
4.♙g5!? Chess is actually quite a difficult game. I have played a lot of games with 4.♙g5 here, but after a short training session with a very smart guy (I'll reveal his name and give him all the credit after the whole Grand Prix series has come to an end) a few weeks before the start of the Moscow GP, I realized that I didn't have a single idea about what I was doing. We (he) managed to find some new ideas and upgrade my knowledge quite a bit. 4...dxc4!? Obviously not the only move, but the most ambitious one. As far as I know it's considered to be some kind of an official refutation, but that view will probably change quite soon.



5.e4! That was one of our main points. I've tried some stupid moves like 5.♖a4+ and others, but 5.e4! is by far the most challenging move. 5...b5 6.a4 c6 7.♘c3 Now we have transposed to the Botvinnik System where White has

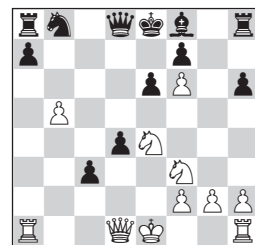
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played 7.a4 instead of the main line with 7.e5, but this doesn't make it any worse for White. 7...b4 Black has a lot of alternatives, but I'm not going to publish the results of our work. Anish's choice is not a real mistake yet, but the edge is getting closer. 8.♘b1 ♙a6 9.e5!? 9.♖c1!? is also reasonable if White wants to slow down a bit. 9...h6



10.♙xf6 During the game I actually couldn't believe that 10.♙h4 g5 11.exf6 gxh4 12.♘bd2 is better for Black than the position in the game. Come on, it's all about development and Black has only given a stupid pawn for the tempi? Still, I decided that it makes sense to follow the lines I'd checked precisely. The explanation is probably that pawns can also matter sometimes. 10...gxf6 11.exf6 c5 First I was slightly worried about 11...♖d5, but then I realized that 12.♖c2! (12.♘bd2? c3 is the point) is the move and I'm in time to capture c4: 12...b3 13.♖c3 c5 14.♘bd2 with an edge for White. 12.♘bd2 c3?! The first mistake of the game. I knew that 12...♘c6! is the move and it's OK for Black, but he is down to only moves in most of the lines that follow: 13.♙xc4 ♙xc4 14.♘xc4 ♖xf6 and

now White has different attempts, but Black is holding: 15.♖e2 (15.a5!?: 15.dxc5 ♖d8) 15...♘xd4 16.♘xd4 cxd4! 17.♘e5 (or 17.♘b6 axb6 18.♖b5+ ♖e7 19.♖xb4+ ♘d7 20.♖b5+ ♘c7 21.♖c1+ ♙c5 22.♖xc5+ bxc5 23.♖xc5+ with a draw) 17...d3 18.♖e4 ♖c8 19.♘xd3 ♙d6 with equality. 13.bxc3 bxc3 14.♙e4 cxd4 15.♙b5+! My general approach to this crazy kind of positions is quite simple: as I know I'm not capable of calculating everything, I'm trying to play the move I like during the first seconds of thought. Getting a pawn to b5 and restricting the black knight felt extremely natural. 15...♙xb5 16.axb5



16...♖d5? Now White is winning. 16...d3! was the only move. I don't know if White is winning here, but at least I failed to prove it with an engine. Which doesn't mean Black is holding, as it's a common mistake to think you can never go wrong following the engine's lines. It feels extremely close and I won't be surprised if somebody will find a win for White. Here are some sample lines that I found: 17.0-0 17.♘xc3 ♘d7 18.0-0 ♘xf6 19.♘e5 ♙g7 20.♘c6 ♖d6 21.♖f3 0-0 22.♖fd1 with an

Structures and Openings

by Glenn Flear



Englishman Glenn Flear lives in the south of France. For every Yearbook he reviews a selection of new chess opening books. A grandmaster and a prolific chess author himself, Flear's judgment is severe but sincere, and always constructive.

In the chess world, many openings are routinely associated with particular pawn structures. A topical example (see the review to Khalifman's + Soloviov's book below!) being the Scotch Defence, where White almost always has a pawn on e4 (but no d-pawn), whereas Black has a pawn on d6 (with no e-pawn). This is so prevalent, it's even been referred to as the 'Scotch Centre'.

Some experts have been thinking of this link from another angle, that is, the study of certain middlegame pawn structures will enable us to better handle those openings where they arise. Some typical examples that readily come to mind are isolated queen's pawns (IQP's), hanging pawns, and the so-called Carlsbad structure.

So this brings me to the Maroczy Bind, which most frequently arises from the English Opening, King's Indian Defence, and certain forms of the Sicilian (such as the Accelerated Dragon). Adrian Mikhalchishin and Georg Mohr would perhaps argue that if we understand what we should be aiming for in the middlegame, then the path leading there becomes somewhat easier. So maybe it's time to modify the way we learn some of our openings?

Adrian Mikhalchishin, Georg Mohr
Understanding Maroczy Structures
Thinkers Publishing 2019

From the title, it's already evident that this is not the usual sort of thing that I am asked to review. It turns out that it's essentially a middlegame strategy manual with relevance to decisions made in the opening. So although choices from an earlier stage are evoked, most of the time we are concerned about the consequences that follow once one side has already put their central 'Maroczy Bind' in place. Both authors are Senior FIDE trainers (the highest title in the coaching domain) and have great experience in the teaching process, so have called upon their own archives of instructive examples. It's a collection of 127 games (with a fair number being truncated), sorted by the choice of plans. The chapter headings already give the impression that the subject has been thought through in a logical and thorough manner. Early on (in the page-turning experience this reviewer tirelessly undertakes!) it struck me that this would make a useful handbook for other coaches (I mean the less-well organized ones such as myself, who haven't got round to classifying their coaching material by structure).